

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-02 SS-15 NSC-05 AID-05 COME-00  
L-03 HA-05 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 /068 W  
-----008510 140021Z /66  
R 122311Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8765  
INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

UNCLAS GUATEMALA 0240

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (DRINAN, CONGRESSMAN ROBERT), ES, GT, SHUM  
SUBJ: CONGRESSMAN DRINAN'S GUATEMALA PRESS CONFERENCE JAN. 12

1. CONGRESSMAN ROBERT DRINAN IN AIRPORT MET WITH MEMBERS OF  
GUATEMALAN PRESS CORPS AND SPOKE ABOUT HIS VISIT TO EL SALVADOR.  
TIME/LIFE AND AP STRINGERS WERE AMONG THOSE WHO ATTENDED.

2. USIS RECORDED THE PRESS MEETING. WE ARE POUCHING COPY OF  
TAPE TO EMBASSY SAN SALVADOR.

3. FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE IMPORTANT POINTS IN OPENING REMARKS  
BY DRINAN:

- GOES IS CONDUCTING SYSTEMATIC CAMPAIGN TO DEFAME CLERGY;
- GOES IS SUPPRESSING EVERY ORGANIZED CAMPESINO GROUP;
- ONLY ONE SALVADORAN NEWSPAPER IS NOT DOMINATED BY GOES;
- GOES SEEKS TO DIVIDE THE CHURCH;
- QUASI-MILITARY GROUP "ORDEN" INTIMIDATES THE PEOPLE;
- CONGRESSMAN PERSONALLY SPOKE WITH 35 PERSONS, EACH OF WHOM

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HAD A FAMILY MEMBER KIDNAPPED AND/OR MURDERED;

-THERE IS NO RULE OF LAW IN EL SALVADOR; IT IS NOT CERTAIN  
ROMERO WAS ELECTED LEGALLY;

-LABOR UNION LEADERS SAY REPRESSION IS WORSE SINCE JULY 1;

-LAW ADOPTED NOVEMBER 25 IS WORSE THAN THE STATE OF SIEGE; THIS LAW MAY CONSTITUTE A REASON FOR TERMINATION OF ALL US AID;

-DRINAN PLANS SUBMIT REPORT TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ON HIS TRIP TO EL SALVADOR;

-CONGRESS WILL HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME CONTINUING AID TO EL SALVADOR IF THERE IS NO CHANGE IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION.

4. DRINAN ALSO REPLIED TO A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS. HERewith A PARAPHRASING OF SOME OF THE QUESTIONS AND THE CONGRESSMAN'S ANSWERS:

Q. WHAT CAN THE US CONGRESS DO ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN EL SALVADOR?

A. IT CAN TERMINATE ALL ECONOMIC AID.

Q. DID GOES COOPERATE IN YOUR VISIT?

A. YES, WITH EXCEPTION OF MINISTER OF DEFENSE.

Q. ARE YOUR STATEMENTS IN CONFLICT WITH TODMAN?

A. YES -- IN THE SAN LORENZO CASE. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE GRANTED FUNDS FOR THE DAM. THIS WAS NOT A DECISION OF CONGRESS.  
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Q. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR THE US POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO INFLUENCE THE INTERNATIONAL LENDERS, E.G. WORLD BANK AND IDB?

A. YES. THE CONGRESS STATES TO AMERICAN OFFICIALS IN THE MULTILATERALS SUCH AS THE WORLD BANK THAT THEY SHOULD PROTEST VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT THEY DON'T NECESSARILY HAVE TO VOTE AGAINST THE LOANS.

Q. IS THE US GIVING MILITARY AID TO EL SALVADOR?

A. NO.

Q. DID YOU SPEAK WITH THE US EMBASSY IN EL SALVADOR?

A. WE TALKED EXTENSIVELY, AND THEY COOPERATED TOTALLY. THEY ARE SEEKING TO MOTIVATE THE NEW GOVERNMENT TO OBSERVE HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY HOPE THERE WILL BE RADICAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. WE DISCUSSED OUR FINDINGS WITH THE EMBASSY LAST NIGHT. THERE SEEMED TO BE NO SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCES REGARDING THE FACTS WE FOUND. BUT OBVIOUSLY I CANNOT SPEAK FOR THE AMBASSADOR.

Q. DO YOU PREDICT ANY IMPROVEMENT IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS  
SITUATION IN EL SALVADOR?

A. I HOPE OUR REPORT AND THAT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN  
RIGHTS COMMISSION WILL HELP.

Q. IS YOUR TRIP OFFICIAL?

A. IT'S A PERSONAL TRIP PAID FOR PRIVATELY BY A GROUP OF  
CHURCH PEOPLE. BOTH CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS IN THE US ARE  
UPSET ABOUT RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN EL SALVADOR.

Q. WHAT OTHER MEANS CAN THE US USE TO PRESSURE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS?  
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A. ENCOURAGE AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN TO URGE THE OBSERVANCE OF  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND ENCOURAGE WORLD OPINION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

Q. HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF A WITHDRAWAL OF US INVESTMENTS?

A. WE CAN'T TELL PRIVATE COMPANIES TO WITHDRAW.

5. DRINAN OFFERED NO COMMENTS OF SUBSTANCE ABOUT GUATEMALA.  
BOSTER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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